

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 49

By Southerland

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Wayne Bettis for his meritorious service to Ruritan National.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those venerable persons who are dedicated to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens and who have thus distinguished themselves as civic and charitable leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy individual is Wayne Bettis of Greene County, who recently chaired the 2017 Ruritan National Convention, held in Kingsport; and

WHEREAS, composed of individuals who are dedicated to building a better America through "fellowship, goodwill, and service to community," Ruritan is a national community service organization formed to create a better understanding among people and, through volunteer community service, make this nation's communities better places in which to work and live; and

WHEREAS, held at Kingsport's MeadowView Center, attendance at the 2017 Ruritan National Convention reached more than 800 on Saturday night, the culmination of the conference; a motivational talk by Steve Siemens, known as "The People Builder," had been expected to draw a crowd of 175 people, but instead drew more than twice that many; and

WHEREAS, the convention was capped off with a concert by country artist Lee Greenwood, who was enthusiastically received by the Ruritans; he was greeted at the venue with a sign reading "Proud to be an American and a Ruritan," a nod to his patriotic song "Proud To Be an American"; and

WHEREAS, the eighty-sixth convention in Ruritan history, this was the first convention held in Northeast Tennessee, although Mr. Bettis predicts it will not be the last; and

WHEREAS, Greene County was well-represented at the convention: all nineteen Ruritan clubs in the county participated; Dr. David Green, pastor of Greeneville First Baptist Church, led a vespers service the first night; Baileyton's Robert Bailey, Ruritan's National President in 1967, led an invocation during the weekend; and, in a ceremony honoring each state in which Ruritan clubs exist, the Greeneville High School Band performed each state's song as its flag was presented; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bettis and current National President Calvin Shelton, a Greene County resident, were active leaders in the convention, as was Mr. Shelton's wife, Patsy Shelton, who was honored as the "First Lady of Ruritan" at a breakfast on Saturday morning; Green Countian Rob Belcher, Mr. Bettis's neighbor, served through the convention as Mr. Bettis's assistant; and

WHEREAS, Wayne Bettis was the 1993 National Ruritan President and is one of Greene County's most active Ruritan members; and

WHEREAS, Wayne Bettis enjoys the loving companionship and support of his wife, Judy Bettis, who prepared food for more than 700 people for one part of the convention and created and put together table displays; and

WHEREAS, following his successful 2017 Ruritan National Convention, Mr. Bettis is content to be simply a Ruritan member; he would like to do some fishing to relax after the labors of playing host and planner for such a large event; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are proud to recognize the leaders of those service organizations that possess a rich history of benevolence, serve a vital role in our society, and stand as a testament to the virtues of integrity and compassion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Wayne Bettis for his meritorious service to Ruritan National, an organization that has greatly enhanced the quality of life for Tennesseans, and as the chair of the 2017 Ruritan National Convention, extending to him our gratitude for his exemplary work and our wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.